

**Organizations Opposing Senate Bill 313 (S-2) Because of  
Unintended Yet Negative Impact on Children's Health**

December 4, 2014

American Academy of Pediatrics - Michigan Chapter

The Arc Michigan, Inc.

The Arc of Oakland County, Inc.

CLEARCorps/Detroit

Detroit Lead Partnership

Ecology Center

Family Promise of Grand Rapids

Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan

Ingham County Health Department

Michigan Association for Local Public Health

Michigan Breast Cancer Coalition

Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health

Michigan Environmental Council

Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health

Michigan Nurses Association

Michigan's Children

School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter

Southeastern Michigan Association of Neonatal Nurses

We Are For Children (a West Michigan pediatric-focused  
primary care group)

## **Senate Bill 313 (S-2) Has Unintended Yet Negative Impact on Children's Health**

December 4, 2014

Dear Chairwoman Price and Members, House Local Government Committee:

We the undersigned oppose Senate Bill 313 (S-2) because of the unintended yet negative impact it will have on children's health, specifically efforts to protect children from lead paint hazards in rental properties.

Current law requires rental property in applicable cities, townships or villages to be inspected no less than every four years. If the most recent inspection found no violations and there had been no change in ownership, the period of time between inspections can be no less than every 6 years. This bill significantly changes this standard.

Senate Bill 313 (S-2):

- Would eliminate the requirement for local units of government to inspect rental properties unless the government elected to conduct those inspections;
- Would allow, rather than require, an enforcing agency to maintain a registry of owners and premises regulated by the Act;
- Would allow local units of government, where the most recent inspection found no violations and there had been no change in ownership, to allow a minimum period of time between inspections of no less than 6 years (instead of no more than 6 years), and eliminates any requirement for local governments to ever inspect the homes again, except under emergency, if a complaint is made, or if there is a change in ownership;
- Makes numerous other changes which essentially will make it more difficult for local units of government to complete regular inspections and ensure the safety of rental properties.

Lead poisoning causes irreversible brain damage which results in learning disabilities and violent behavior in children and adults. Year after year, childhood lead poisoning takes its toll on Michigan's General Fund, through increased costs in health care, special education, academic failure, and public safety.

Over 16,000 Michigan children were estimated to have dangerous lead levels in 2011; 2,000 of these cases were children with extremely high levels. But it is impossible to gauge the full extent of lead poisoning as only about 20% of Michigan children under the age of six are tested every year!

Approximately 70% of the housing stock in Michigan was built before 1978, the year which lead paint was banned. Many of these homes still contain lead paint and lead hazards. Because of Michigan's climate, the construction methods used, and the age of the state's housing stock, a significant amount of deterioration can occur in six to ten years.

Past legislators recognized how serious lead paint exposure is for young children by passing legislation requiring swift action to address lead hazards. Under current law, a property owner with knowledge of a lead paint hazard is guilty of a crime if he or she has not taken action by 90 DAYS to address the lead hazard. This law was passed with the support of rental property owners. The timeframe for action in this law is certainly at odds with a policy allowing such hazards to go undetected for years.

There are other reasons that make routine and regular inspection of rental properties especially critical at this time. Federal and state funding for lead paint poisoning prevention and treatment have been severely cut. The Legislature took steps to reverse this trend by providing funding in recent budgets for abating lead in homes with an identified lead poisoned child. It would be unfortunate to see that effort undermined by delaying regular, routine housing inspections and the early identification or prevention of lead hazards.

In closing, we urge you to vote "no" on Senate Bill 313 (S-2).

Respectfully,

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